

Will Fund Study of Bio-lubricants in American Rail Industry

Washington, DC – Congressman Bruce Braley (D-Iowa) secured \$370,000 today for the University of Northern Iowa's National Ag-Based Lubricant Center (NABL). NABL, the country's leading bio-lubricant research center, will use the funds to conduct a study of the widespread use of bio-based products in the freight and passenger rail industry. Braley toured NABL's new facility in Waterloo on Tuesday.

"This grant allows UNI-NABL to conduct a study that could be a critical turning point in transportation developments," Braley said. "Analyzing the widespread benefits of bio-based products in America's rail industry could reduce the use of petroleum-based products and move us closer to our ultimate goal of energy independence. Iowa is a leader in clean energy efforts and this study could be critical in moving our nation's railroad industry to a cleaner, safer bio-based operating system."

Bio-lubricants are soybean oil based products that reduce America's dependence on foreign oil. According to NABL, as much as 10 million pounds of petroleum-based railroad grease could readily be converted to soybean oil each year. The use and sale of bio-lubricants would be a direct boost to US farmers and agribusinesses while also strengthening our national security.

Braley originally authorized the NABL study by passing language as part of HR 2095, the Railroad Safety Improvement Act, which was signed into law by President George W. Bush on October 16, 2008.

The Braley language required the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) to conduct a study on the use of bio-based lubricants in the freight and passenger rail industries. In June 2010, the NABL applied to work with the FRA to conduct the study and was accepted through a competitive grant process.

For more information about NABL, visit www.uni.edu/NABL .

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